



# Greening Headquarter's Update

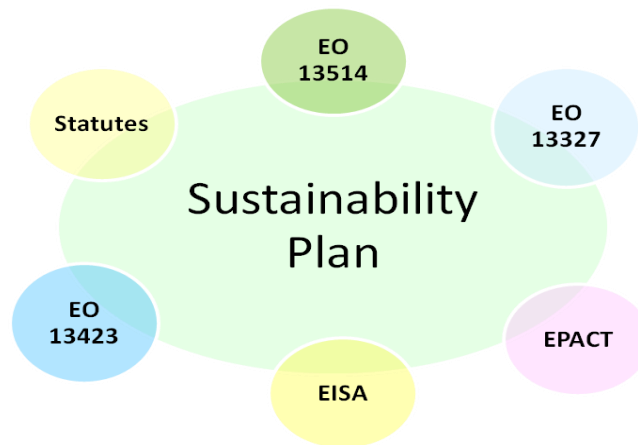
APRIL 5, 2010

## Greening Updates:

*Office of  
Operations*

## Contents:

- Strategic Sustainability Performance Plan (SSPP)
- HQ Environmental Footprint
- Waste Minimization & Recycling
- Home Stewardship
- BioPreferred
- Landscaping
- South Bldg. Modernization
- Energy
- Events



## USDA's

## Strategic Sustainability Performance Plan (SSPP)

Executive Order (E.O.) 13514, *Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy, and Economic Performance*, requires USDA to develop, implement, and annually update an integrated Strategic Sustainability Performance Plan (SSPP). The SSPP is a single document that lays out USDA strategy for achieving goals and targets required by E.O.'s and statutory requirements.\* The SSPP provides information to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on performance, cost, schedule, and annual progress. The USDA Office of Procurement and Property Management's Environmental Management Division is preparing the USDA SSPP due for submission by June 2, 2010.

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\*The SSPP is an integrated framework for achieving goals and targets for E.O. 13514; E.O. 13423, *Strengthening Federal Environmental, Energy, and Transportation Management*; E.O. 13327, *Federal Real Property Asset Management*; the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (EISA); the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EPACT), and other statutes.



## Reducing Environmental Footprints

# USDA Agencies Reducing Their Environmental Foot Print at Headquarters

The Forest Service Washington Office (WO) Green Team kicked-off the New Year with a greening outreach event at the Sidney R. Yates Building. Employees learned about saving energy, composting, sustainable gardening, and the USDA's People's Garden. The WO green team has an ambitious plan



this year to reduce their staff's environmental footprint by decreasing energy use and increasing recycling in the office. The team is planning education and outreach events and working with building staff to accomplish their goals.

The Forest Service WO Green Team Outreach Event in January 2010

## Waste Minimization and Recycling Updates

Lately, our recycling rate has been just over 40%, up significantly from just a few years ago. In March, the Headquarters Green Team conducted the annual trash sort for the headquarters complex. The team sorted through over 600 pounds of trash from the complex. The objectives were to document the effectiveness of our Waste Minimization and Recycling Program and to determine where we can improve. We found that there was a modest improvement in the recycling program compared to last year. Though a lot of recyclables were found in the office trash (especially plastic bottles), the percentage of recyclables was less compared to what we found in our trash sort last year. This suggests that the program is slowly improving. See <http://docs.google.com/Doc?docid=0AR3CrF-qXquYZDk2a2R0cl8zOWRjc2JrZ2d0&hl=en%20> for trash sort write up.



**Recycling  
Saves  
Money!**



Photo of Trash Sort - No better way to start a Friday morning

Not only are USDA staff recycling, our service contractors are also doing their part. Grunley Construction, our General Contractor for the Wing 5 Modernization, is currently diverting 98% of the construction waste (carpet, gypsum boards,



Construction worker collecting metal control valves for recycling

masonry and other materials) from landfills. The diversion of construction waste from landfills is part of our overall effort to get the South Building LEED certified as a "green" building.



**Help keep our  
Earth Green!**

Did you know  
that during  
our  
snowstorms,  
USDA  
Headquarters  
used bio-  
based ice  
melt? Ice  
Ban, one of  
the ice melt  
products used  
in the facility,  
is made from  
corn oil.

## **Be an Environmental Steward at Home**



According to the EPA, Americans throw away about 96 billion pounds of food each year, and it is taking up space in the landfills. An easy way to reduce waste in landfills is to compost your kitchen waste. A low maintenance, smell-free compost technique that can be placed inside or outside your home is worm composting. Worm composting uses red worms to decompose the bacteria on food scraps into usable compost for gardening. Beginning a worm compost bin is easy and affordable. To raise worm compost, four aspects are necessary-worm compost bin, worm bedding, worm food, and composting worms. To start your own worm compost, visit [www.vericompost.net](http://www.vericompost.net) for more information.

## **Environmental Purchasing BioPreferred Adds Product Categories for Green Federal Purchasing**

Over the past year, the BioPreferred program made great strides in bringing additional bio-based products to Federal purchasing. In October 2009, BioPreferred finalized its "Round 5 Item Designation." This regulatory action added more than 1,000 bio-based products to the approximately 3,500 bio-based products already eligible for preferred Federal procurement.

The Round 5 final rule will increase BioPreferred's total product offerings to approximately 4,500 bio-based products across 40 product categories. These are products that are used every day by USDA agencies – construction and industrial products; janitorial items; facility operations, maintenance and motor shop products; and food service items. By law, the Federal government (USDA, other Federal agencies, and the military branches) must give products in these categories preferred purchasing preference as of October 2010. Round 5 items include chain and cable lubricants, corrosion preventatives, food cleaners, forming lubricants, gear lubricants, general-purpose household cleaners, industrial cleaners, multipurpose cleaners, and parts wash solution. To learn more about the Round 5 items above, you may download the factsheet at [www.biopreferred.gov/designations.aspx](http://www.biopreferred.gov/designations.aspx).

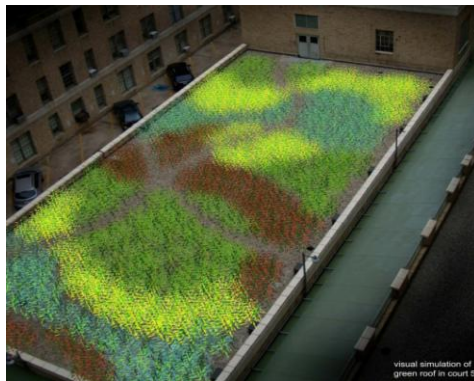
To request support for increasing your purchasing of any of the BioPreferred products, you may email: [biopreferred@usda.gov](mailto:biopreferred@usda.gov).





Come  
see the  
USDA's  
People's  
Garden  
on the east  
side of the  
Whitten  
Building

## Sustainable Landscaping



Work has begun on the new Court 5 green roof. The green roof is scheduled to be completed by April. Court 5 is being modified to demonstrate storm water management practices using a 500-gallon cistern and sustainable landscaping practices.

The **People's Garden** Workshops start the first Friday in May. The Workshops are from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. Youth Programs in the Garden will start on the first Wednesdays. These one-hour programs will be at 10:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m., and at 2:00 p.m. Details about the workshops and youth programs will be posted on the People's Garden webpage in early April. See [www.usda.gov/peoplesgarden](http://www.usda.gov/peoplesgarden). Last year's workshops covered managing storm water, composting, community gardens and many other topics.



Pea Planting Party in the People's Garden in March. Now is the time to plant your peas and lettuce.



**South  
Building  
Wing 5  
Modernization  
Progressing**



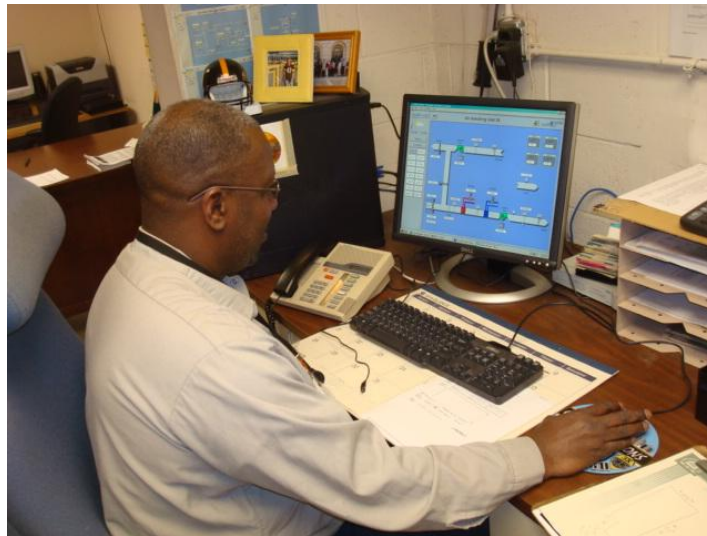
New electric lawn mowers that will be used to cut Whitten grounds. The new mowers will demonstrate our commitment to reducing petroleum use and improve the air quality in the city.

## **South Building Modernization**

The South Building Modernization work is proceeding on schedule in Wing 5. The first phase of work is the demolition work. As noted above the demolition work is done in such a way to minimize the environmental impacts of this work by reusing architectural features and by recycling as much of the waste that cannot be reused as possible. One interesting "green" feature that will contribute greatly to the comfort in the offices, even though most employees will be unaware of it, is the Direct Digital Control System or DDC System. Unlike the old control systems, the equipment in the modernized offices is controlled with digital technologies. Operating Engineers can monitor building systems and office temperatures from their control room. The building operations in the modernized areas are automated, and problems are quickly identified and frequently corrected before the occupants even realize there is a problem.



**Heavy  
snow storm  
in  
Washington,  
D.C.**



**NATI Operations  
Engineer  
monitoring the  
operations of one  
of our South  
Building Heating,  
Ventilation, and  
Air Conditioning  
(HVAC) systems.**

Incorporating sustainable features in our construction projects and building operations is not always easy. Many of the products that show promise may not make it in the market, for example the bio-based jute-ceiling tile mentioned in the last update. By the time the Wing 5 project went into the construction phase, the jute based ceiling tile was no longer manufactured.

## **Energy**

The snowstorms and cold weather in February affected more than the roads, parking lots, and sidewalks. Due to the extended cold weather, the Headquarters Complex's steam heating usage and cost were well above those in February 2009. Overall, however, we are projecting that our total steam usage for FY 2010 will be slightly lower than the last Fiscal Year. Thanks in part to the closing of the Federal Government during the snowstorms, we are expecting our electrical usage in the second quarter of FY 2010 to be significantly lower than it was during the second quarter of FY 2009. So far this fiscal year our electrical usage is significantly lower than last year's. Overall, we are anticipating easily exceeding the 3% reduction in electrical usage required in our latest Executive Order.



USDA Headquarters during the snow storm in February

The next big energy conservation effort will occur later this year when we replace an outdated chiller that is used to provide chilled water to the complex. Not only is the old chiller energy inefficient and expensive to operate, the maintenance costs on the unit continue to grow as the chiller ages. This project is expected to save well over 600,000 kWh per year. That is enough electricity to power 60 typical homes in the D.C. area.



Local  
Events!

### Upcoming Events:

- April 10 – the 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Potomac River Clean Up - Clean Up sites across the region.  
[http://www.fergusonfoundation.org/trash\\_initiative/trash\\_cleanup.shtml](http://www.fergusonfoundation.org/trash_initiative/trash_cleanup.shtml)
- April 24 – Anacostia River Clean Up & Celebration - Clean Up Sites in Montgomery, Prince Georges, and the District of Columbia.  
[http://www.anacostiaws.org/programs/stewardship/earth\\_day](http://www.anacostiaws.org/programs/stewardship/earth_day)
- April 22 – USDA Earth Day/Farm to Fork Festival from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the East Whitten Lawn. The theme this year is water. Learn about USDA Chesapeake Bay initiatives, truck farms, pollinators, etc. The Executive Master Gardener graduation is from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.





Photo from last year's USDA Earth Day Event on the Whitten East Lawn.

- Public Service Recognition Week: **Civilian and Military Public Service Exhibitions**  
Thursday, May 6 / Friday, May 7 / Saturday, May 8 - 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. On the National Mall. Many exhibits on government "greening" efforts.
- Join the GreenGov Collaborative on [www.fedcenter.gov](http://www.fedcenter.gov). The GreenGov Collaborative, an online discussion group hosted by FedCenter.gov, is your opportunity to work with colleagues across the government to put green ideas into action.